

Solution Architecture Enablement for Insurance Carrier



Client: A regional provider of property & casualty insurance products and related financial services in the central United States of America



Situation

The client established an Enterprise Architecture team to set long-term technical direction. However, a gap remained between Enterprise Architecture and the IT projects. The Chief Enterprise Architect recommended establishing a Solution Architecture discipline that would:

- Bridge the gap with the IT projects
- Prescribe specific Solution Architectures for IT projects
- Guide architecture realization during IT project execution
- Perform Architecture Governance
- Provide a rationale basis for IT Portfolio Planning



Challenge

I joined the Enterprise Architecture team to lead Solution Architecture enablement. Several challenges existed:

- The IT disciplines were at a formative stage; having been initiated only recently:
 - IT Portfolio Management
 - IT Program & Project Management
 - Solution Development Life Cycle (SDLC)
 - IT Asset Ownership
- Architecture Governance was not yet established
- IT skill sets were not aligned with the technical direction set in the Enterprise Architecture



Action

As Enterprise Architect, I led 3 fellow Architects in establishing and maturing the Solution Architecture discipline and integrating it with other IT disciplines.

- Conforming to TOGAF 8.x
- Compatible with:
 - Rational Unified Process (RUP)
 - Enterprise Unified Process (EUP)
 - Project Management Institute (PMI) PM-BOK
 - Control Objectives for Information and related Technology (COBIT 4.1)
 - Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL)



Result

Solution Architecture practice and governance was defined, implemented, and applied to all IT projects.

- Solution Architecture discipline integrated with:
- IT Portfolio Planning
 - Program & Project Management
 - Solution Development Life Cycle (SDLC)
 - IT Asset Ownership

Integrating Solution Architecture with IT Portfolio planning yielded a US\$6 million savings in the US\$70 million annual IT budget